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4-H and YOUTH



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FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE—U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

A dairy project



Learning consumer skills



4-H and YOUth

4-H Club meeting



4-H TV club



Training leaders



YOU have a stake in 4-H—whether you're a member, leader, friend, or belong to the citizen public—because 4-H is for everyone. And 4-H benefits everyone.

4-H'ers are young people 9 to 19 years old. Leaders are adults and teenage volunteers. Friends are helpers and supporters.

WHAT 4-H IS

4-H is a unique, out-of-school, informal education program for young men and women. It is one of the largest youth programs in the world. 4-H'ers live on farms, in small towns, cities, and suburbs—and come from all economic and cultural backgrounds. They "learn by doing," which is their slogan. They carry on varied projects in science, agriculture, home economics, personal development, community service, leadership, and citizenship.

This is the 4-H emblem . . .

The four "H's" stand for HEAD, HEART, HANDS, and HEALTH. Colors are green and white. The 4-H pledge reads:



*I pledge my Head to clearer thinking,
my Heart to greater loyalty,
my Hands to greater service, and
my Health to better living,
for my club, my community and my country.*

WHAT 4-H MEMBERS DO

Every 4-H'er selects one or more "projects," as a real-life learning experience. He gains useful new knowledge, understanding, and skills that fit his home and family situation. These experiences often open doors to future careers. Many kinds of projects are available for every age. Some are in:

Agricultural production and marketing—including meat animal, dairy, poultry, garden, and field crops.

Engineering—electrical, automotive, tractor.

Conservation—forestry, wildlife, entomology, recreation, beautification, soil, and water.

Management—farm, home, money, town and country business.

Family living—food and nutrition, clothing, grooming, furnishings, home grounds, child care.

Personal development—health, safety, career exploration, leadership, and citizenship.

Other popular projects include arts and crafts, dog care, horsemanship, emergency preparedness, and public affairs.

4-H TODAY

The modern 4-H program offers members “why’s” as well as “how’s” in its science emphasis. Youth going into farming choose specialized projects. Boys and girls with special needs—due to economic, social, health, or other causes—receive more than usual aid and encouragement. Also, attention is given to youth problems relating to personal values, career exploration, and accomplishment of goals.

4-H HELPS YOUNG PEOPLE . . .

- Acquire knowledge of science and scientific methods.
- Explore careers and improve employability.
- Learn agricultural production and management principles.
- Improve home and family living.
- Create desirable relationships with others.
- Promote safety, health, and fitness.
- Engage in community development.
- Value and conserve natural resources.
- Appreciate cultural arts and use leisure constructively.
- Increase leadership competence.
- Become productive and responsible citizens.
- Share in international progress and understanding.

HOW 4-H BEGAN

The 4-H program grew out of a widespread need in rural America in the early 1900’s. Corn, pig, tomato, and canning clubs were forerunners. Among the pioneer leaders were school teachers and other educators who wanted a “living laboratory” to supplement their classrooms. Finally in 1914, Congress passed the Smith-Lever Act which provided for a national Cooperative Extension Service. Under it, the “boys’ and girls’ club work” became 4-H.

About one in every six men and women in the United States has belonged to 4-H.

HOW 4-H REACHES YOUTH

Most of today's three million 4-H'ers belong to 4-H Clubs. Others participate in other ways. For example, thousands of young people now take part by television. On TV, 4-H offers educational series with suggestions for doing projects at home. Another 4-H approach is through a special interest group. Older boys and girls, for instance, may enroll in a money management workshop. On completion, they may form another interest group.

Members of *clubs* organize, elect officers, and plan programs—aided by adult leaders and parents. They choose projects that fit them and the places where they live.

County, State, regional, and national activities—such as trips, camps, and conferences—offer all 4-H'ers other learning opportunities.

Nearly half a million men and women, mostly parents, serve as unpaid volunteer leaders of local 4-H Clubs. They counsel and encourage members, observe progress of projects, and make suggestions where needed. County Extension agents select, train, advise, and assist these adults.

Older 4-H'ers called "junior" or "teen" leaders aid younger members and gain valuable experience for themselves.

4-H AROUND THE WORLD

The 4-H idea now circles the globe. About 75 countries have adapted it to their own needs. The movement in some places is called 4-H and uses the familiar green four-leaf clover emblem. Elsewhere, 4-H may become "4-S," "4-K," "5-V," or another local adaptation.

Many people in distant lands have learned of 4-H through the International Farm Youth Exchange. Through "IFYE," young Americans go to other countries and young people of other lands come to the United States to live, work, and share experiences for a few months with

host families. Since the program started in 1948, about 2,000 exchangees from nearly every State have taken part. The inbound have totaled about 2,200 from 70 countries.

PARTNERS FOR 4-H

The 4-H program is a part of the national educational system of the Cooperative Extension Service, shared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the State Land-Grant universities, and county governments. The National 4-H Service Committee in Chicago, Ill., and the National 4-H Foundation, Washington, D.C., are members of the team.

FRIENDS OF 4-H SERVE

Many firms, organizations, and individuals give valued support to 4-H at local, State, and national levels. Groups of 4-H friends help plan and conduct 4-H work. They add vitality to the program. They also offer a chance for interested and qualified people to help extend 4-H advantages to more youth and adults everywhere.

Public-spirited donors provide generous incentive awards and leader training materials. They also arrange for resource persons and special advisers to aid 4-H'ers and their volunteer leaders.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON 4-H

Write, visit, or phone your County Extension office. Or write the Cooperative Extension Service of any State Land-Grant university, or the Federal Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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